

WHO ARE THE ELECT?

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*“And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him, for this is he.”
1 Samuel 16:12.*

SAMUEL was sent to Bethlehem to discover the object of God's election. This would have been a very difficult task if the God who sent him had not accompanied him, and spoken with the sure voice of inspiration within him as soon as the chosen object stood before him. Brethren, it is neither your task nor mine to guess who God's elect, apart from marks and evidences are. What was done in the councils of eternity before the world was made is hidden in the mind of God, and we must not curiously intrude where the door is closed by the hand of wisdom. Yet in the preaching of the word there is a discovery made of God's secret election. We preach the gospel to every creature under heaven; we deliver God's threats and promises to every sinner, and we cry, “Look unto Jesus and be you saved, all the ends of the earth.” That gospel is, of itself, through God the Holy Spirit, the discernor of the chosen ones of God, when they feel its quickening power and are raised from among the spiritually dead. The gospel is a fan which, while it drives away the chaff, leaves the wheat upon the floor. The gospel is like a refiner's fire, and like the fuller's soap, removing all that is extraneous and worthless, but revealing the precious and the pure. We ministers have no other way by which to discern the saints of God, and to separate the precious from the vile, but by faithfully preaching the truth of God as it is in Jesus, and observing its effects. As for ourselves, we may discover our own calling and election, and make them sure. Paul said of the Thessalonians, that he knew their election of God; and we may discover the election of other men to a very high degree of probability by their conduct and conversation, and be certified of our own election, even to infallibility, by the witness of the Spirit within that we are born of God. If our heart is renewed by the Spirit, if we are made new creatures in Christ Jesus, if we are reconciled unto God and redeemed from dead works, we may know that our names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life from before the foundation of the world.

This morning I am about to speak upon the way in which we may discover the chosen, making the case of David in some degree our guiding star.

I. I would have you mark at the outset, THE SURPRISE of all, when they found that David, the least in his father's house, was the object of the Lord's choice as king over Israel.

Observe that *his brothers had no idea that David would be selected*. Such a thought had never entered their minds. If the question had been asked of them, “Who among you will ever attain to the kingdom?” they would have selected any of the other seven, but they would certainly have passed by their brother, David. He seems to have been thoroughly despised by his brothers. Eliab addresses him in a tone of scorn when he comes to the valley of Elah—“Because of your pride and the naughtiness of your heart, you are come to see the battle.” This mode of speech was, no doubt, such as he usually employed towards the young man. I suppose that David had been one by himself. The sports of the seven were often such that he could not engage in them. He was no companion for them. If they at any time perpetrated any unjust or unrighteous deed—if, as probably a band of seven young men in the hey-day of youth were likely to do—they were bold in courses of sinful mirth—David would follow the example of Joseph, and act as a reprover in their midst, and consequently he fell under their contempt. He was with his flock on the mountain side when they were making merry with their drinking; his book and his harp were his solace, contemplation was his great delight, and his God his best company, while his brothers found no pleasure in divine things. He, like our Lord, could say, “For Your sake I have borne reproach; shame has covered my face. I have become a stranger unto my brethren and an alien unto my mother's children” (Psa 69:7, 8). Like Joseph, he was “the dreamer” of the family in the esteem of the rest. They thought him moon-struck when he considered the heavens, and called him mad when he meditated both day and night on God's law.

Now, beloved friends to whom I address myself, you may be one of those whom God has looked upon with an eye of love from before the foundation of the world, and yet, in the family to which you belong you may be overlooked and forgotten. Your own brethren have formed a very low opinion of your abilities, and they have a perfect contempt for the singularity of your character. You are as a speckled bird among your own kinsfolk; you cannot enjoy what they enjoy; your loves and your longings run in a different channel from theirs. Allow not their contempt to break your heart. Remember David once stood in your position, and there was yet another in the earlier days upon the crown of whose head the blessing of the eternal hills descended though he was separated from his brethren; and so may heaven's enriching smile yet rest on you, for the Lord sees not as man sees. The rejected of men are often the beloved of the Lord.

It is more painful to notice that *David's father should have had no idea of David's excellence*. A father has naturally more love to his child than a brother to his brother, and frequently the youngest child is the darling; but David does not seem to have been the tender one of his father. Jesse calls him the least, and if I understand the word which he uses in the original, there is something more implied than his being the youngest; he was the least in the estimation of the ill-judging parent. It is strange that he should have been left out when the rest were summoned to the feast, and I cannot acquit Jesse of fault in having omitted to call his son, when that feast was a special religious service. At a sacrifice all should be present; when the prophet comes, none should be away, and yet it was not thought worthwhile to call David, although one would think a servant might have kept the sheep, and so the whole family might have met on so hallowed an occasion. Yet no son was left in the field but David, all the others were assembled. It sometimes happens, (but O, how wrongly!) that one in the family is overlooked, even by his parent, in his hopes and prayers. The father seems to think, "God may be pleased to convert William; He may call Mary; I trust in His providence we shall see John grow up to be a credit to us; but as for Richard or Sarah, I do not know what will ever become of them." How often will parents have to confess that they have misjudged, and that the one upon whom they have set the black mark has been, after all, the joy and comfort of their lives, and has given them more satisfaction than all the rest put together! Are you such a one, young man? Are you painfully conscious that you have a narrow share in your parents' hearts? Be not downcast, distressed, or broken-hearted about this. You fare as David did before you, and if he, the favored servant of God, the man after God's own heart, could put up with his position, be not you too proud to abide in it, for even if your father and your mother forsake you, if the Lord takes you up, He will be better to you than the best of parents!

It is clear, also, that *Samuel, God's servant, had at first no idea of David's election*. The brothers advanced one by one, and Samuel, using his human judgment, was ready to select any other rather than David. The minister of God, if he is truly called and sent, has a yearning in his soul to bring out God's chosen from their hidden state. His eyes are quick to discern the first tokens of divine grace in a renewed soul. But sometimes the Christian minister is deceived. He consults with flesh and blood, and selects Eliab, the one who is a *fine person*, whose noble countenance bespeaks something above the ordinary level, whose whole frame is so admirably fashioned, that he is good to look upon. How true is it that the Lord takes not pleasure in the legs of a man. The gifts of personal appearance often become snares instead of blessings; "Beauty is deceitful, and favor is vain." The Lord had not chosen Eliab. Then *rank* will come before the minister, and if he sees a person of high estate cheerfully listening to the gospel, he is very ready to think, "Surely the Lord has chosen him"; but how often these are but birds of passage in our congregation who never tarry long enough to build a nest in the sanctuary. Mere curiosity brings them, and a new curiosity carries them elsewhere. Surely the Lord has not often chosen these Abinadabs. Again, others are so *well educated* that when the word is preached, they appreciate the style in which it is delivered, and the remarks which they make concerning it are so sensible and so judicious, that the preacher is apt to say, "Surely the Lord has chosen these!" And yet, how often the educated are too proud to believe the simplicities of Christ and the intellectual turn on their heels because the gospel is scarcely refined enough for their taste. At other times, we feel sure that we have now pitched upon the right man, for we are charmed with our hearer's *natural amiability of disposition*, and are cheered by his tenderness and susceptibility of mind to religious impressions; and yet we are disappointed. Many lovely blossoms never become fruit, and hopeful saplings prove not to be plants of the Lord's right-hand planting, and therefore are plucked up.

At times, too, we hear such *admirable conversation* about religion, that we conclude, “Now we have found the chosen of the Lord.” We have sat in company, and heard young men use devout expressions which implied no ordinary depth of Scriptural knowledge; we have heard those persons pray, and have admired their great gift in prayer; they have addressed religious assemblies, and spoken with a high degree of fluency, and our heart said, “Surely the Lord has chosen these!” And yet, my brothers in the ministry will tell you that often out of the many hopefuls who have passed before them, they have found many to be heart-breakers, and few who gave them any real satisfaction as to their conversion to God. Meanwhile, the very ones whom we overlooked, the least ones in the assembly, have been the Davids upon whom God’s blessing has fallen. Oh, some of you have listened to our word these 10 years and more, and you have been impressed again and again—and yet you are unconverted! We often thought you must be the chosen of God when we marked your tears and your apparent feeling, but up till now you are without any evidence of election.

On the other hand, there has dropped into this place a drunkard, and there has strayed into these aisles a harlot, and the mighty grace of God has converted them, and they are rejoicing now in the full forgiveness of their sins while you are yet “in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.” How true is that word, “The publicans and harlots enter into the kingdom of heaven before you.” How matchless is the sovereignty of God! “His ways are past finding out.” The very poorest, the most illiterate, the mean and most obscure, the fools, the babes, the things despised—yes—“the things that are not” does He choose, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence. It strikes me that there was one person more astonished when David was anointed than even his brothers, or his father, or the prophet—and that was *David!* He was a wonder unto many, but chiefly to himself. He had communed with God alone beneath the spreading trees; he had sung the praises of Jehovah in the wilderness where he had led his flocks; and by the waterside he had tuned his harp, and made the rocks echo with the sweet music of his grateful soul; but he never dreamed of being a king! If a prophet had said to him, “The Lord will take you from following the sheep to be ruler over His people Israel, and He will be with you wherever you go, and cut off all your enemies out of your sight, and make you a name like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth,” he would have cried, “What am I, O Lord God? And what is my house, that You have brought me here? Is this the manner of men, O Lord God?”

So, dear friend, you may be truly a child of God, but you may, as yet, have no clear view of the high and noble calling to which God has ordained you. Your trembling faith has laid its hand upon the head of Jesus, and you trust you are forgiven—but as yet, you do not know the grandeur and dignity to which faith exalts every heir of heaven. Now, let me whisper in your ear words concerning your present greatness and the glory which is yet to be revealed in you. “Beloved, *now* are we the sons of God; and it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like He, for we shall see Him as He is.” You are justified by faith, and you have peace with God, and do you not know that, “Whom He justifies, them He also glorifies”? You shall be surely glorified! Do you know the reason for this? It is because you are “elect according to the foreknowledge of God, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.” Yes, poor trembler, the thoughts of God were exercised concerning you before the stars began to dart their rays through the thick darkness; Jehovah-Jesus wrote your name upon His heart, and engraved it on the palms of His hands before the skies were stretched abroad. Be of good courage, there is a kingdom for you! The sure mercies of David have ordained you to overcome and to sit down upon Jesus’ throne, even as He has overcome and is set down with His Father upon His throne. Be glad, therefore, for it is the Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. I think I see you all surprised, and you say, “How can it be? I! Chosen of God! My many sins, my great infirmities, my doubts, my barrenness in God’s service—the coldness of my heart—all these make me go mourning. Can it be that yet He has ordained me to a kingdom?” It is even so. Let your faith grasp the truth, and go your way rejoicing.

Remember, dear friend, that it matters not what your occupation may be, you may yet have the privilege of the kingdom of God. David was but a shepherd and yet he was raised to the throne, and so shall each believer be. You may be obscure and unknown, in your father’s house the very least, and yet you may share a filial part in the divine heart. You may be among those who never would be mentioned except as mere units of the general census, without parts, without position; you may almost think yourself to have less than the one talent; you may conceive yourself to be a worm and no man—and like David you may say, “I was as a beast before You.” And yet think of this—that the marvelous election of God

can stoop from the highest throne of glory, to lift the beggar from the dunghill and set him among princes!

II. We shall now turn our thoughts to THE TOKEN of election, the secret mark which the Lord sets in due time upon the chosen.

In due time, every chosen person receives the seal of divine grace. That stamp is a new heart and a right spirit. Let all men understand that a new heart is the private seal of the divine One, the broad arrow of the King of kings. Men look upon the outward appearance as the mark of favor, but God looks at the *heart* as the token of His choice. We are not to suppose David was chosen to salvation because of the natural goodness of his heart, for he tells us himself that he was, “Born in sin and shaped in iniquity.” Although we are willing to grant that when God had renewed his heart as the result of His sovereign grace, a goodness of heart constituted a qualification for the kingdom, just as grace is a fitness for glory, but the righteousness of heart was itself the *gift* of sovereign grace, and was the effect and not the cause of the primary and eternal election which fixed on David. We do not intend to discuss the reason of God’s election—let us not be misunderstood—of that we know nothing; we believe that God chooses wisely, but He chooses from reasons not known to men, probably reasons which could not be understood by us. All we know is, “Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.” We are now speaking of the way by which God seals His elect and distinguishes His chosen ones, after His grace has operated upon them. They are distinguished by having a heart that differs from other men. May we be able thus to discover whether we are among them or not!

What kind of heart had David? We may find it out by his Psalms. We cannot tell when some of the Psalms were written, but if any of them were written in his youth, the 23rd was certainly one. That beautiful pastoral poem opens a window into the heart of David, let us look through it, and we shall soon perceive that he possessed *a believing heart*. How sweet is the sentence, “The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.” Happy David! He had summed up all his needs and cares, he knew that he needed pardon for sin, and divine grace to preserve him from evil, wisdom to guide him in the perilous paths of youth, strength to aid him in the conflicts which were before him; but instead of looking to himself or to friends, he turns away from all created good, to God, and by faith he says, “The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.” Here is a grand mark of divine election. Dear friend, do you rest in God for everything? Has your heart given up all confidence in itself? “He who trusts in his own heart is a fool.” Has your heart given up all trust in your fellow man? “Cursed is he who trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm.” Have you seen the emptiness of your own doings, and willings, and beings, and wishings, and have you taken the Lord as He reveals Himself in the pages of Scripture—Father, Son, and Spirit—to be your All in All? If you do so trust, you need not fear your election, for when God looks into your heart, He sees in your faith the symbol and sign of His sovereign grace. Never was there a simple faith in Himself where there had not been His hand at work, and His heart ordaining to eternal life.

We note, as we read the Psalm, that David’s heart was also *a meditative heart*. Mark the words, “He makes me to lie down in green pastures: He leads me beside the still waters.” He elsewhere writes—“My meditation of Him shall be sweet.” The whole book of Psalms, which is David’s life written out in poetic characters, proves, that he was much given to meditation on heavenly subjects. Alone there on the mountains, down by the rippling brooks—wherever he had to conduct the flocks—there he set up an altar to his God, and made an oratory for himself. Much sweet communion was carried on between David and his God which Eliab knew nothing of, and into which Abinadab could not enter. Read the 119th Psalm, and you will see that he won for himself all the blessings which by inspiration he sang of in the first Psalm. He meditated upon the law of his God both day and night. Dear friend, is that your case? When your thoughts get free, do they fly away as the dove does to its dovecote—right away to God? Can you say with David that His Words are sweet to your taste? Is the very name of God dear to you? Do you delight yourself in Him? Do you meditate much upon the Person of Jesus Christ? Remember that by your thoughts you may judge your state, and if your heart does not meditate on God’s statutes, you certainly miss one of the signs of divine election; for elect souls are brought out in due time to find a delight in the ways and Words of God.

Go on with the Psalm, and I think you will be struck with *the humble heart* which David had, for all the way through he does not praise himself. “*He* leads me beside the still waters, *He* restores my soul.” See, he has no crown for his own head; the crown is all for the Mighty One who is his Shepherd. His soul was in his pen when he wrote, “Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Your name be all the glory.” Da-

vid was none of your strutting peacocks who cannot be content unless all eyes are upon them; he sang God's praises as the nightingale will sing in the dark, when no human ear is listening and no eye is admiring. He was content to bloom unseen, knowing that the sweetness of a renewed heart is never wasted on the desert air. He was satisfied with God alone as his auditor, and he coveted not the high opinion of man. Before his God how high he rose, and yet how low he bowed. How deeply did he feel his indebtedness to Him who gave him all, and how zealously did he ascribe his salvation, and glory and strength, unto Him who had been from the first to the last his helper. He would have enjoyed the verse in which Asaph alludes to his low estate, "He chose David also His servant, and took him from the sheepfolds: from following the ewes, great with young, He brought him to feed Jacob, His people, and Israel His inheritance." O for a heart free from all pride.

We should altogether fail in describing David if we were to omit other qualifications. His was a *holy heart*. Observe in the same Psalm, "He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake." David delighted not in iniquity; the men of Belial he put far from him. "A liar shall not tarry in my sight," he said. He loved the people of God; He styles them, "The excellent of the earth in whom is all my delight." Holiness which becomes God's house was very delightful to David's soul. He loved the commandments of God because of their holiness. "Your Word is very pure, therefore Your servant loves it" (Psa 119:140). I grant you that he did once fall into grievous sin, but that was an exception to a gracious rule. His rule was holiness. The best of men are men at the best, and therefore they may slip, but oh, how bitterly David mourned to his dying day, the evil into which he fell. "He was a man after God's own heart, and his way was ordered according to holiness."

Note what a *brave heart* beat in his breast. Where will you find a braver man than David? "Your servant slew both the lion and the bear, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them." It is this David who, while the cringing host of Israel flies from combat, enters the battle with the boasting Philistine, and brings deliverance unto Israel. Hear the stripling's valorous voice—"You come against me with sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied." How bold was David in most cases! There *were* times when he, like the children of Ephraim, turned his back in the day of battle; take for instance, when he played the fool before Achish; but in other cases, his soul was set against the Lord's enemies, and though a host encamped against him, his heart did not fear; though war was waged against him, in this was he confident; for he wore the breastplate of dauntless courage. The Psalm right bravely puts it, "Yes, though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff they comfort me."

Let me remind you that he had a *very contented and grateful heart*. I do not know a better picture of David in his early days, than that which Bunyan gives us of the shepherd who was singing in the valley of humiliation—

*"He who is down needs fear no fall;
He who is low, no pride;
He who is humble ever shall
Have God to be his guide.
I am content with what I have,
Little be it or much;
And Lord, contentment still I crave,
Because You save such."*

Here is David's version of the very same sentiment, "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies: You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over." He had all his heart could wish. I do trust, dear friends, we can, some of us, humbly claim that we possess such a heart as this, and oh, that my tongue may be able to say without deceit, "Yes, Lord, my soul is satisfied with what You ordain, whatever *Your* will is, it shall be my will."

You should further observe *the constancy of David's heart*. He says, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord *forever*." He was not one of the Pliables, who set out and turn back again at the first slough into which they tumble; he was no Demas, ready to forsake his profession to win this present evil world; but all the days of his life he abode close to the way of the Lord, and remained as a servant in God's house.

By such marks may *we* know our election. I would God that those who are so positive of their election would condescend, sometimes, to try themselves by Scriptural marks and evidences. We are told,

by certain divines, that we should never doubt our safety. Beloved, we should never doubt *God*, but I am inclined to think that no man who exercises a holy watchfulness over himself, and a holy earnestness to be found accepted at the last, can be at all times without doubts as to his own interest in Christ. I am persuaded that the hymn—

*“Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,”*

is the experience of every child of God, more or less, and that there are seasons when that is the best hymn which a man can sing. It is seldom that I doubt my interest in Christ Jesus, but it is very often that I ask myself, “Is this confidence well-grounded?” And if I were afraid to question myself, if I were afraid to go back to the foundation and search myself thoroughly, if I always went on blindly confident, and never examined myself whether I were in the faith—I think that would be an omen of being given up to a strong delusion to believe a lie. I have labored in your presence to preach up the privilege of strong faith; I have urged you to strive after full assurance of faith; but never let these lips say a word or a syllable against that holy carefulness which makes a broad distinction between presumption and assurance. Depend upon it, privilege preached always without precept, will breed a fullness and lethargy in God’s people—what we need at certain seasons is not a promise, but a telling, burning word of self-examination—the flavor of which we may not like, but which shall work in our souls spiritual good of a more lasting sort than sweet comforts would bring to us. Examine yourselves, dear friends, then, by this.

I do not ask you whether your hearts are perfect—they are not; I do not ask you whether your hearts never go astray, for they are prone to wander; but I do ask you—is your heart *resting* upon Jesus Christ? Is it a believing heart? Does your heart meditate upon divine things? Does it find its best solace there? Is your heart a humble heart? Are you constrained to ascribe all to sovereign grace? Is your heart a holy heart? Do you desire holiness? Do you find your pleasure in it? Is your heart bold for God? Does your heart ascribe praises to God? Is it a grateful heart? And is it a heart that is wholly fixed upon God, desiring never to go astray? If it is, then you have marks of election. Search for these, and add to all your searching this prayer, “Search me, O God and know my heart: try me and know my ways; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” Let me beseech you to pray God to pull your comforts into pieces if they are false comforts. I have pleaded with my God on bended knee full often, to let me know the worst of my case, and if I am deluded, deceived, or deceiving, I do pray Him to tear the bandage from my eyes and take away every balm from my wounded heart, except the balm of Gilead, and never to let me rest till I am soundly grounded and bottomed on Christ Jesus, and nowhere else but there. Do make sure work in this case. If you must have, “Buts,” and, “Ifs,” and, “Perhapses,” have them about your estates and your property, but not about your souls. May the Holy Spirit help you to be often using the crucible to see whether your profession is true gold or not.

III. The third point is a very interesting one. It is MANIFESTATION, or the way in which the elect of God are made apparent to ourselves and others.

We cannot see the hearts of our fellow men, and therefore the heart can never be to us the way of distinguishing the elect of God—except so far as it is seen in acts and words. Now the first sign by which this election was made known to David himself, and to a few others who probably did not know much about it, was by *his being anointed*. Samuel took a horn of oil, and poured it on David. I do not think Jesse knew the full meaning of it. I feel sure that the seven brothers did not, for if they had, someone or other would have told Saul. Master Trapp says, seven can only keep a secret when six of them know nothing about it. I am inclined to think that though they saw him anointed with oil, they could not bring themselves to think that such a despised one as David was really anointed for the kingdom. They saw the symbol, but probably did not understand the inward grace. But David did; David knew that he was now to be a king, and though he never stretched out a hand or lifted a finger to get that throne for himself, though he often spared his enemy, Saul, when killing him might have brought him suddenly to the crown, yet he knew that he would one day reign over Israel. Beloved, there is a season when God anoints His people. They have believed, but there may elapse a little time between the believing and the conscious anointing; but suddenly, when the Lord has illuminated their hearts to know and understand divine things clearly, the Spirit of God comes with a sealing power upon them, and from that day forward they rejoice to know that they have the indwelling of the Spirit, and that they are set apart for God. I pray that some of you who have been lately converted may get your sealing from this day forward. If you shall receive it, you will be different men and women from what you were. Already saved by grace,

you will then begin to feel that force, and power, and vigor, which renders the man of faith the master of the world. If you are anointed, you will feel the royal blood within your veins. As yet you do not know your kingship, but if the Spirit of God shall descend upon you in plenteous measure, you will know your dignity, and you will act like kings, reigning over inbred sins, and seeking, as much as lies in you, to exercise the royal priesthood which the Master has conferred upon you. This inward sealing may be recognized among the saints; a few may be able to see in you the sealing, do not expect that many will, for it is only to yourself that it becomes the infallible witness that you are one of God's elect.

The manifestation, however, went on in another way. After the anointing, it appears that *David became a man distinguished for the valor of his deeds*. Saul's servant in recommending him says of him, that he was, "A mighty valiant man and a man of war." Your election will be discovered by this—you will do what others cannot do. An elect soul, when the Spirit of God is upon him, can answer that question, "What do you do more than others?" Not proudly, but still calmly he can say—"There are many things which others do not and cannot do, which are easy to me through Christ who strengthens me." You will be able now, dear friends, to break through the toils of custom; to wrestle with the lion of worldliness, to exhibit patience under suffering, to forgive your worst enemy without difficulty, to serve God in deeds of faith, you will be able, in His strength, to be content to see your good name trod in the ditch if you may exalt Christ. Through the Holy Spirit you will do and dare where others are sluggishly cowards; you will dash forward to the conflict expecting the victory because God is with you, or you will be willing to suffer, because the Lord has strengthened you to bear all things for His sake. Your election will be best known to your fellow men by your deeds of valor.

It appears, too, that David was *very prudent*. The same witness-bearer said he was, "A man prudent in matters." Such will you be, when, as the elect of God the Spirit of wisdom rests upon you. You will not be in a hurry, you have nothing to gain; you will not be alarmed, you have nothing to lose; you have God and therefore you have all things; you cannot lose your God, and therefore you can lose nothing; and being in no hurry, you will have time to judge and weigh matters. "He who believes shall not make haste." Life will be with you no confused scramble. You will not be blundering out of one error, into another, because you will take your matters before God in prayer. You will consult the Scriptures, and your heart will be guided of the Lord. You will, if you live near to God, know when you come to a point of difficulty which way to turn; you will hear a voice which says, "This is the way, walk in it." You will know, when you come to a difficulty where human wisdom is utterly worthless, how to fall flat on your face and wait until the strong arm comes to deliver you. You will be taught in the things of God and bold to teach others also, and so, daily, your election will be made known to your fellow men.

Mark well that one of the ways by which your election will become clear and sure to all God's people, will be this—if you are anointed king as David was before you, *you will come into conflict with Saul!* It cannot be possible that the chosen of God shall forever live in peace with the heirs of hell. He, who put an enmity between the Seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, takes care that that old enmity shall never die. The two first men of woman born were enemies of one another for this reason, and until Christ shall come, that same enmity will exist. Saul may like you for a little time if you can play well upon an instrument, and drive away his melancholy, but when Saul finds you out and discovers you to be the anointed king, he will hurl his javelin at you. The world is very satisfied with some ministers, and with some Christians, because they very much resemble itself; but as soon as the world finds out, "This is a man separate from us, of a different nature, and of a different country," it cannot but hate the man—it must do so. Do you expect the world's good word? Then go your way and flatter it, and bow to it, and cringe, and be its servant, and you shall have your reward in everlasting contempt. But are you willing to take your lot outside the camp with Jesus, and to be recognized as being not of this world because He has chosen you out of the world? Then expect to receive hard measures, expect to be misconstrued and misrepresented, and to be despised, for your reward shall be when He comes, but that reward shall outweigh all that you endure here below!

I think David was never more clearly manifested to be God's elect, than at the last *when he was an outlaw*. He never seems such a grand man as when he is among the tracks of the wild goats of Engedi; never so great as when he is passing through the wilderness while Saul is hunting him, or standing at midnight over the sleeping form of his enemy, and saying, "I will not touch him, for he is the Lord's anointed." We do not read of many faults and slips and errors then. The outlawed David is most certainly manifested to all Israel to be the chosen of God, because the chosen of man cannot stand him. The

happiest and best days, I believe, with the people of God, are when they are most outlawed by men, when they are put out of the synagogue, and when he who would kill them thinks that he did God a service. The brightest days for Christian piety were the days of martyrdom and persecution. Scotland has many saints, but she never has had such rich saints as those who lived in covenanting times. England has had many rich divines who have taught the word, but the Puritanical Age was the golden age of England's Christian literature. Depend upon it—you will find in your own life you may have many days of heaven upon earth, but the place of persecution and rejection will be the spot where Jesus Christ manifests Himself most to you. Are you resolved not to be conformed to this world? Are you willing to bear with Christ the brunt of the battle, and like the living fish to swim against the stream? Are you ready to stand out like the other holy children in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, and to say, like the apostles in the days of the high priests, "Whether it is right to serve God or men, you judge"? Have you cast off the fear of man? Have you taken up the cross to wear as your best and greatest ornament and treasure? If so, you are giving the very best evidence of having been chosen out of the world because you are not of the world.

Remember, to conclude, that *after all conflicts were over, David was crowned*. All Israel and all Judah sent to fetch David, and they made him king; amidst the blast of the horns, and the homage and songs, and joy of the people, David, the elected one, was publicly recognized. The crown was put upon his head, the imperial mantle graces his person, he signed the decrees, and his word was law from Dan to Beersheba. The day comes when the like shall be true of the mean and the most despised of God's chosen! "Truly," said the apostle, "it does not yet appear"—we cannot see it, only faith can discern it, but it shall appear—it comes! The appearing draws near! Our head shall yet wear the crown, for we shall reign with Christ Jesus! I think even this earth, which has despised us, shall yet know us as kings when we shall reign with Him. We shall yet put on the imperial purple; from the river, even to the ends of the earth, the saints shall possess the kingdom; and when Jesus comes to judge the people, we shall judge angels, sitting as assessors with Him, giving our verdict, and adding our, "Amen's," to all His sentences. No, even in heaven itself, angels shall be our servitors; they shall be ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation, and we shall sit upon thrones. Oh, Christian, you know not the pomp which shall yet surround you! You have had some glimmering thought of the Savior's glory, and the Savior's dignity, but have you not forgotten that all this is *yours*? Remember, *we* shall be like He when we shall see Him as He is. "Father, I will that they whom You have given Me be with Me where I am." The same place for *you* as for the Savior and you shall behold His glory, and you shall be partakers of it! Why, then, should you fear? Why should you be downcast and dismayed by reason of the trials on the way? Come! Pluck up courage! An hour with your God will make up for it all. One glimpse of Him and what will persecution seem? You have been called ugly names. Ill words have been pelted at you—but what will they be when you shall hear Him say, "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world"?

There! The world's thunder is gone like a whisper amidst the more glorious roll of angelic acclamations and the hiss of enmity is all forgotten amidst the kiss of love which the Savior gives to all His faithful ones. Cheered by the reward, I pray you press forward! Greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt shall you have who can renounce all for Christ's sake! "Be you faithful unto death, and He will give you a crown of life." God grant that we may all be found numbered among the elect of divine grace, and none of us be cast away, and His shall be the praise forever and ever. Amen.

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